



USAID
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CROATIA

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

Commercial Law Program



USAID Croatia

USAID assisted in reorganizing and streamlining work procedures in the Zagreb Land Registry office, the largest in the country. Data conversion operations were initiated at the Land Registry, which heralded the transformation from an archaic handwritten process to a fully computerized system.

Implementer: Booz Allen & Hamilton

Partners: Ministry of Justice, Commercial Courts, Croatian Employers Association, Croatian Chamber of Economy, Croatian Chamber of Crafts and interested businesses

Project completed March 2004

Long delays in resolving disputes and establishing title to property in the Croatian courts are seen as one of the reasons for the inert Croatian economy and lack of international investment. When the project was designed there were over one million unresolved cases in the Croatian court system. USAID provided technical assistance, in close coordination with the World Bank, in the functional design of an automated case management system for Croatian Commercial Courts to modernize the paper-based record keeping system that seriously hampered judicial and administrative processes. Improving the Commercial Court's ability to track cases and provide statistical information on court activities reduces litigation time and the huge case backlog. USAID assisted the Zagreb Commercial Court to implement a modern microfilm and digital procedure to maintain and store company records. Quicker access to company information with fewer errors enables investors and businesses to make investment and credit decisions faster.

Results The functional design for a computerized system to track cases through the courts and provide statistical information on judicial activity in commercial courts was developed in conjunction with a sister USAID project. Twenty court judges attended two study tours to view the automated case management systems and mediation practice in West European courts. Numerous commercial court judges, trustees and bankruptcy administrators received training during the life of the project.

Draft Collateral Registry legislation was developed working with a Ministry of Justice designated workgroup.

Forms, strategies and recommendations for the Zagreb Land Registry were developed, feeding into the Ministry's Real Property Registration and Cadastre Project.

Over 90 mediators were trained in alternative dispute resolution in commercial disputes. Direct assistance to future ADR centers was provided on inception and operational procedures.